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PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE USE OF FACEBOOK IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Abdulvahit Çakir & Çağla Atmaca

Abstract: *This study aims to find out student teachers' perceptions about the use of Facebook in English language teaching and their preferences on how to integrate Facebook into English classes. This study, which is based on a mixed method research, consisted of written and oral interviews with 221 student teachers in the English Language Teaching (ELT) program at Gazi University during the fall semester of the academic year 2012-2013. Of the 221student teachers, 38 (18%) were male and 173 (82%) were female. 146 participants (69.2%) were in favour of Facebook integration into English classes while 58 participants (27.5%) were against and finally 7 participants (3.3%) were neutral. In terms of age and level of learners, adolescents were preferred as the most appropriate age group to be taught English on Facebook; intermediate level was the mostly preferred language level to be enhanced via Facebook. Furhtermore, self -study was seen as the most important type of Facebook use. These findings show us how student teachers' educational preferences can be changed in line with the education they receive and how they should be trained according to the current educational moves and communication tools.*

Keywords: Facebook, social networking sites, student teachers, English language teaching.

Introduction

The use of technology plays an important role in the lives of people from every walk of life so it is only natural that educators make use of it for a better instruction. As learning foreign languages is gaining importance day by day, the philosophy and actual practices of foreign language teaching have undergone drastic changes. Since most students are familiar with computer technologies and good at using them, e-materials especially arouse the attention of educators (Blattner & Fiori, 2009).

The possibility of utilising technology has generated interest in educational settings. A recent development in online language teaching is the shift from single classrooms to long-distance classrooms involving collaboration with two or more classrooms, even in different countries for improving intercultural competence or cultural literacy (Kern, 2006). There are various studies that focused on the implementation of technology in foreign language instruction. For instance, in a study it was found that most English teachers had positive attitudes towards technology integration into their classes but they also reported some drawbacks in the implementation process, which might result from lack of professional training resulting in insufficient use of computer technologies in their classes (Karakaya, 2010) and this shows the necessity of the inclusion of newer technologies like popular SNSs into the 21st century education and teacher education for long-term success (Hubbard, 2008).

Recently, there has been much interest in the implementation of Web 2.0 tools for educational purposes. There are studies conducted on student teachers and they came up with varying findings, both in favor of and against Facebook application in educational settings (Muñoz & Towner, 2009; English & Duncan-Howell, 2008; Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Kung & Chuo, 2002; Stern & Taylor, 2007; McVey, 2009; Çoklar, 2012). Thus, it can be said that the study of Facebook integration has become an important aspect of foreign language instruction.

Facebook integration into foreign language learning settings has been studied by many researchers. However, certain learner characteristics seem to be the overlooked areas in Facebook integration into English language classes. Therefore, this paper presents deeper analysis regarding student teachers' perceptions about Facebook integration into English classes by considering such factors as age and level of learners, types of use as in-class, outside-the-class and self-study as well as language domains to be enhanced via Facebook. It is expected to shed light on an overlooked area of foreign language teaching since student teachers' perceptions are taken into consideration with learner characteristics in terms of Facebook integration into Turkish EFL context.

Review of the literature

New technological tools might seem promising with advantages like feedback tools, conveying meaning, reflecting on the activities in a funny way but technology cannot become a teacher by itself (Scoter, 2004). Necessity of changes in learning contexts and its impacts on education have been stressed in different studies as well (Abbitt, 2007; Greenhow et al., 2009; Mazman & Usluel, 2010) since the arrival of the Internet and computer mediated communication (CMC) tools have made L2 learning easier by providing great amounts of input, authentic materials and interaction opportunities (Karakaya, 2010). Therefore, teachers should change their teaching styles, materials and activities in line with changing needs of students and technology because on-line learning offers a community of inquiry, social presence, cognitive presence, instructor presence and supports critical thinking with its rich resources (Anderson, 2011).

Some Web 2.0 applications like wikis and blogs have influenced learning and teaching as users have active roles like contributing to the content and controlling it (Abbitt, 2007). These applications integrate technology with teaching methodologies (Banks & Faul, 2007). Web 2.0 applications could be utilised for both social and educational purposes as e-learning environments facilitate collaborative learning (Cheung et al., 2011). Foreign language teaching has also been affected by the emergence of Web 2.0 tools like blogs, wikis, podcasts and social networking thanks to their opportunities for authentic materials, unlimited learning, synchronous or asynchronous communication styles but how to meet student needs remains an important factor for a successful application (Sturm, Kennell, McBride & Kelly, 2009).

Social networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook and Twitter are gaining popularity day by day. The reason might result from the fact that SNSs are different from traditional CMC in that content does not only cover the creator's information but is also shaped by the changes or contributions that friends make (Tong et al., 2008). SNSs offer different activities like sharing personal information, connecting with other users, uploading, tagging and sharing videos, photos, comments and

joining groups with common interests (Lockyer & Patterson, 2008). If the demands of the 21ˢᵗ century skills are considered, it is seen that it is compulsory for teachers to be good at using new technology in order to meet the needs of digital natives better (Cephe & Balçıkanlı, 2012).

There are research studies on Livemocha, Second life, Penzu and Flicker but Facebook is the most famous and widely used social network (Balaman, 2012). Here users can create content and choose what to focus or ignore among mass-produced content (Pempek et al., 2009). Users can reach loads of information about arts, sports and travel while feeling safe by hiding certain information from others (Zhao et al., 2008). They can also join groups and create new ones according to their interests and hobbies. As is seen, Facebook is a unifying tool since it combines the features of other Web 2.0 tools within itself, like *MySpace* and *Friendster*, the image-sharing site *Flickr* and the open-source learning management system *Moodle*. Therefore, teachers can utilise Facebook for educational purposes (McCarthy, 2012). Teachers can easily harness Facebook for educational purposes because they can connect with students for free and students can feel a sense of belonging in the closed groups (English & Duncan-Howell, 2008). When Facebook is considered as an educational tool, Muñoz & Towner (2009) points out that teachers and students can create groups for specific purposes of the courses or the teacher can share links, websites, videos and various documents to tailor the courses for students' different learning styles and expectations. However, a separate account for educational activities is also needed to protect professionalism and not to cross the boundary of the teaching-student relationship (Muñoz & Towner, 2009).

Facebook facilities, technological capabilities and offline interaction have attracted attention of many researchers (Sturgeon & Walker, 2009) and it has been researched for different aspects like social capital, identity, privacy and academic purposes (Bosch, 2009). In addition, Facebook is found to have a significant positive relationship with usefulness, ease of use, social influence, facilitating conditions and community identity. Besides, usefulness is considered as the most important factor in the adoption of Facebook as well as the rapid increase in the number of its users (Mazman & Usuluel, 2010). Although Facebook is a popular website, it still needs more research studies to understand how to use it for what purposes (Greenhow, 2009).

As many people have a Facebook account and use it frequently, we can benefit from Facebook to teach language skills to our students (Stern & Taylor, 2007). People can have more friends on Facebook they have never seen, share pictures in their online albums, discuss their interests and hobbies, and list their friends. They can interact with one another through comments and messages. All these features make Facebook unique as an on-line environment (Zhao et al., 2008). When students are engaged in Facebook activities, they will have opportunities to construct their knowledge with the help of community of practice and collaboration, learn informally and develop cross-cultural understanding (Wenger, 1998). Moreover, students are easily connected with each other and share any type of information (Abel, 2005).

According to Kabilan et al. (2010), Facebook can be an online learning environment to facilitate English language learning in terms of improvement of

language skills, confidence, motivation and attitude even out of the class. Facebook applications can join teachers and students via a course link which includes setting up video conferences, posting comments for the class, putting assignments, announcements, documents, and discussion topics (Blattner & Fiori, 2009). Dynamic structure of Facebook makes it appropriate for learning functional and grammatical aspects of the language like learning writing, vocabulary and reading incidentally (Akbulut, 2007; Shahrokni, 2009).

There are more positive aspects of Facebook in foreign language learning in that certain Facebook facilities like chat tool, discussion board, and email and messaging can provide learners with scaffolding they need for their cognitive development (Zainuddin et al., 2011) since learners could get the opportunity to benefit from the visual clues to conclude meaning or repeat and revise the previous linguistic points while they are engaged in Facebook activities. Likewise, mobile phone Facebook application could also enhance meaningful and individual learning thanks to its facilities like authentic material, real-life activities and student-centered education (Shehri, 2011) in which students can discuss about their courses, homework, revise and share information with each other. However, Facebook use can be distractive when exaggerated and result in procrastination, distraction and privacy issues (Vivian, 2011).

In sum, Facebook could be effective for educational purposes for various reasons like its popularity, ease of use, synchronous and asynchronous forms of mentoring and forming a professional online presence. In addition, students can get feedback with the help of a project and improve their academic performance (McCarthy, 2012). Finally, inclusion of blended learning technology can offer students facilities like learning at their own pace. Since Facebook is a tool that is easy to access, learners and teachers may benefit from it for communication and interaction, giving immediate feedback and increasing motivation (Erdem & Nuhoğlu Kibar, 2014).

Although positive and negative outcomes of Facebook application in foreign language teaching has been the focus of many research studies there is still a gap in the Facebook application due to missing information about the dynamics on the part of the learners, that is their characteristics like age and language level. Approaches to enhance language skills and domains on Facebook is still open to debate since there are no concrete findings that support Facebook application with clear and concrete examples. Another gap is the inclusion of student teacher opinions on Facebook application in English language teaching. Therefore, this study aims to fill the afore-mentioned gaps in the literature by analysing student teacher opinions on Facebook application in English language teaching together with learner characteristics and types of use.

Research questions
It is seen that although there have been various studies regarding Facebook, there is still a missing part of its use in foreign language learning settings in terms of student teachers' perspectives about its application. To contribute to the understanding of Facebook use in English language classes, in this study the following research questions will be answered:

1. What are the student teachers' perceptions about the use of Facebook in English language teaching?

    1.1 What language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) and areas (grammar, vocabulary and pronounciation) do student teachers think of improving with the help of Facebook in English classes?
    1.2 What age group(s) can be taught English through Facebook according to student teachers?
    1.3 What language level(s) can be taught English through Facebook according to student teachers
    1.4 How (with what types of use) do student teachers prefer to integrate Facebook into English language classes?

2. Are there any differences between male and female student teachers in terms of their preference of Facebook as a foreign language learning tool?

Research methodology

Research design
This study employs mixed methods research, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods, in order to obtain more valid and reliable research findings.

Mixed methods include both qualitative (textual data) and quantitative (numeric data) methods to benefit from their strong aspects and make the research sounder by unifying them (Dörnyei, 2007). Likewise, in this study, both qualitative (analysing and coding written and oral interviews) and quantitative (calculating frequency, percentages and chi-square, mean, standard deviation) procedures were used to avoid the limitations of purely quantitative or purely qualitative studies. This way, a more practical and reliable research methodology was employed and this allowed the researcher to select different methods to answer the research questions in a broader sense. After the written interview forms (WIF) were applied, oral interviews were conducted to gather detailed data concerning the participants' opinions. The oral interviews were semi-structured in that there were pre-determined questions but the researcher allowed for digression or elaboration to fully understand participants' thoughts. Their answers were instantly transcribed in order not to miss any non-verbal clues like facial expressions and gestures. Their written interview form answers were shown to them to provide stimuli and remind them their initial thoughts while answering the questions, which is also called stimulated recall.

Setting and participants
The setting of the study includes student teachers in English Language Teaching (ELT) programs in Turkey. The participants of this study were 221 student teachers in English Language Teaching Department at Gazi University. The participants were purposefully selected for three reasons. Firstly, they are the seniors who have taken the necessary courses on methodology and educational sciences and are doing practicum as teachers at schools. Therefore, in a sense, they are both teachers teaching at schools and students who are taking courses to complete their own education. Secondly, they wanted to participate voluntarily so their answers are expected to be reliable. Finally, the Gazi University ELT program is one of the largest programs in its field in Turkey. 221 students were

given the Written Interview Form and 21 of them held oral interviews with the researcher in the fall semester of the 2012-2013 academic year.

Data collection instruments

In this study data were collected with the help of a written interview form (WIF) and oral interviews. The WIF consists of questions about demographic features of the participants and their perceptions about Facebook use in English classes. On the other hand, the oral interviews were semi-structured and conducted face-to-face with single-sessions. The WIF was piloted with 21 pre-service teachers enrolled in the same class to test the appropriateness of the interview items and identify any misunderstanding in the language. Expert opinion was also gathered from 3 field experts for data reliability. Based on the feedback and comments from the pilot survey, necessary revisions were made in the interview forms. Each participant was given a number in the interview form so that s/he could be addressed in the later discussions with that number. Besides, no personal information was revealed for more reliable and detailed data gathering.

Data analysis

In this study, data were collected in qualitative methods but analysed in both quantitative and qualitative methods, which provides triangulation. Content analysis was employed to analyse student teachers' responses and get deeper information. The quantitative data analysis was carried out via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to calculate frequencies (F), percentages (%), chi-square measures (χ^2), mean scores ($\bar{x}$) and the standard deviation (SD) and to obtain cross tabulation tables for the research questions and analyses of the socio-demographic features. As for the qualitative data analysis, it consists of thematic categorisation of the data that relate to the choices of the participants concerning types of use (inside/outside the class activities and self-study tasks). While relating the emerging data with the categories, the constant comparison method of grounded theory was applied through in vivo coding.

According to the grounded theory put forward by Glaser and Strauss (1980), generating a theory consists of ongoing changing procedures in a messy way and the constant comparison method includes open, axial and selective coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1980). Categories can be formed with respondents" interpretations, which can be named "in vivo codes" and interpretation may be needed in this phase. Selective coding is when we reach theoretical saturation and refine the theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Findings

Student teachers' demographic features such as their gender, age and possession of Facebook accounts were taken into consideration to examine whether these features are variables that affect the outcome of the study.

Gender of the Participants

Table 1. Gender of the participants

Gender	Frequency(F)	Percentage(%)
Male	38	18%

Female	173	82%
Total	211	100%

As is seen in Table 1, there are 211 (100%) student teachers. 38 (18%) are males and 173 (82%) are females, forming the majority of the total population of seniors in Gazi University's ELT program. Whether gender effects on participant opinions on Facebook integration will be dealt in the following tables.

Age of the Participants

Table 2. Age of the participants

Age Group	Frequency(F)	Percentage(%)
18-20	6	3%
21-23	190	90%
24-26	14	6.6%
27+	1	0.4%
Total	211	100%

Whether age effects participant opinions on Facebook integration will be dealt in detail in the following tables.

Table 3. Mean and standart deviation of age

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	211	1	4	2.05	.335
Valid N (listwise)	211				

When we examine Table 2 we see the total frequency of the age groups. It is seen that of the 211 student teachers, 6 are aged between 18-20; 190 are aged between 21-23; 14 are aged between 24-26 and 1 is aged 27^+. As to the percentages, it was found out that 3% of them are aged between 18-20, 90% of them are aged between 21-23, 6.6% of them are aged between 24-26 and 0.4% one of them is aged 27 or over. In light of the data, it can be said that the validity of the age categorisation was justified since participants aged between 21-23 were found to comprise a great majority of the total participants. Table 3 gives us the mean score and the standart deviation of the ages of the participants, which indicates that there is little difference between their ages and most of them are aged around 22 years old.

Facebook Ownership of the Participants

Table 4. Gender-based Facebook ownership of the participants

Gender	NFB(F)	YFB(F)	Frequency	Percent
Male	4	34	38	18%
Female	33	140	173	82%
GBTF	37	174	211	100%
GBTP	17.5%	82.5%	100%	

Participant Opinions about Facebook Integration into English Classes

Table 5. Gender-based participant opinions on Facebook integration into English classes

Gender	Agree	Disgaree	Undecided	Frequency
Male	26	12	0	38
Female	120	46	7	173
Frequency	146	58	7	211
Percentage	69.2%	27.5%	3.3%	100%

Agree refers to those who agree with Facebook integration into English classes while Disagree refers to those who disagree with the idea and finally Undecided refers to those who are undecided about the idea. When we examine Table 5 in terms of gender, it is seen that of the 211 participants, 26 males favoured Facebook integration into English classes while 12 were against the idea and there were no males who were undecided. Of all the females, 120 favoured Facebook integration into English classes while 46 were against the idea and 7 were undecied. In total, 146 (69.2%) participants were positive, 58 (27.5%) were negative and finally 7 (3.3%) were neutral about Facebook integration into English classes.

Table 6. Chi-Square tests of FA and FAELT

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.744[a]	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	23.442	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	26.482	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	211		

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.23.

When we examine Table 6, we see the chi-square tests (χ^2) of FA and FAELT, that is the relationship between the participants' having a Facebook account and their perceptions about Facebook integration into English classes. Statistical significance was set at a *P* value of <0.05. The results are significant as probability co-efficcient is less than 0.05 (p<0.05), that is, there is relationship between the participants' having a Facebook account and their perceptions about Facebook integration into English classes.

Table 7. Chi-Square tests of gender-FAELT

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.824[a]	2	.402
Likelihood Ratio	3.056	2	.217
Linear-by-Linear Association	.103	1	.749
N of Valid Cases	211		

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.26.

When we examine at Table 7, we see chi-square tests of gender-FAELT relationship, that is the relationship between gender and participant opinions on Facebook integration into English classes. Statistical significance was set at a P value of <0.05. The results are not significant as probability co-efficcient is not less than 0.05 (p>0.05). This is assumed to result from unequal gender distribution in that there were 38 male participants while 173 female participants.

Discussion

The study's research questions will answered by analysing and discussing the frequencies, percentages and participant comments. First, research questions will be restated, then the findings will be interpreted and exemplified for detailed discussion.

Research Question 1: What are the student teachers' perceptions about the use of Facebook in English language teaching?

Both in the WIF and oral interview analyses, it was seen that of the total participants (N=211 with 100%), high majority of the participants (N=146 with 69.2%) were in favour of integrating Facebook into English classes although there was opposition (N=58 with 27.5%) or indecision (N=7 with 3.3%). Therefore, it can be said that about 70% of seniors in Gazi University's ELT program have favourable perceptions towards the use of Facebook as an educational tool in English language classes. Examples from the WIF and oral interviews are given below to have a clear idea about the participants' perceptions about Facebook integration into foreign language education contexts. There are two examples of positive, negative and undecided participants so that we can get a complete idea on each position towards Facebook integration into English classes. Each participant was given a code, that is number to keep their identity confidential and they are referred with these numbers in the following.

Student Teacher Comments
Participant 1, in favour of Facebook integration, indicated her opinion as the following:

> *I think it can be used in teaching. Because when it is used effectively it can be useful. For instance last year I was working at a nursery school, my words were vegetables and I gave my students Facebook farm game as a homework for a month and they enjoyed very much. I succeeded to teach new 20 words in an enjoyable way.*

Here the student teacher articulates that Facebook can be used for teaching vocabulary to learners in an enjoyable way so they can retrieve related vocabulary in the long run when necessary. From the comment, one can even consider how Facebook can work with young learners to teach vocabulary.

Below are two photos illustrating how Facebook could be used to enhance vocabulary knowledge taken from Balaman (2012).

Ufuk Balaman

7- independent (noun/isim) The word and the type of the word
In Turkish: bağımsız Turkish translation
The War of Independence (1919) created an independent nation. Sample sentence
It became independent from Spain in 1816. Excerpt from the passage

Photo related to the word

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · March 10 at 2:14pm

Like button as a counter

👍 Varol Gündüz, Murat Çetin, Taha Tarman and 40 others like this.

Write a comment...

Ufuk Balaman

Week 2 Title of the week
7- hand clapping The word and the number of the word
In Turkish: alkışlama Turkish translation
Flamenco began in the 17th century as a song and dance with very fast hand clapping. Excerpt from the passage

Les Miles Hand Clap Song
www.youtube.com

visit the MZone at http://www.MichiganZone.net/ Les Miles: Mad Hatter, 4th Down Gambler, Bad Clapper

Video related to the word

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · Share · March 17 at 2:40pm
Like button as a counter
👍 Özge Ünal, Varol Gündüz, Barış Gülçay and 45 others like this.

Comment from a participant student
Batuhan Sazanlar i love this game like hell :)
March 18 at 5:22am · Like

Write a comment...

Participant 3, in favor of Facebook integration, indicated his opinion as the following:

As English develops in our modern world, needs also gain much importance in our life. The aim of students' teaching/learning English is also determined by these needs. Let's say that the more developed technology and updated topics we use in classroom environments, the more enthusiastic the students are to learn English, so Facebook can be great help focus.

The student teacher highlights importance of learning English and educational requirements of the era we live in are highlighted. Besides, Facebook is said to motivate learners and help them focus on the learning content.

Participant 40, against Facebook integration indicated her opinion as the following:

I don't think it can be useful in teaching English for some reasons. First of all, as students have the opportunity to talk with their friends, looking at their photos and sharings, they will not deal with the things related to English or any course. If they want, they know that they can find all videos on youtube and on google. Facebook is a way of having fun actually. Facebook is not a tool for teaching English. It is just wasting time. Another reason is that maybe every student doesn't have access to the Internet.

There is concern about Facebook use due to misuse of Facebook for other purposes, which could result from students' lack of motivation to learn on Facebook. Additionally, Facebook may not be regarded as a learning tool by some educators.

Participant 140, also against Facebook integration, indicated his opinion as in the following:

No, I don't think so. Because there is no rule while doing something on Facebook. Not for teaching because Facebook is a social content-web and environment. People log in Facebook to look at others' photos, gossip and sharings. For example when I come across a group like learning one French word each day, I just skip it since learning is…. Needs time. And they, my students, will just skip, too. When I hear Facebook gossip comes to my mind immediately.

Again we see the opposition to use Facebook as a learning tool due to undesired learner attitudes. Thus, we need to be freed from prejudices as teachers so that we can encourage a new technological application in our classes.

Now we will look at comments of two participants who were undecided about Facebook integration into English classes. These are participants 134 and 182 respectively.

" I don't know. Maybe. I am indecisive."

"I don't have a Facebook account so I don't know exactly how it works. However, it can be used as communication."

These two participants are not sure about the potential of Facebook facilities. This may result from their being not exposed to its use in their own education.

Research Question 1.1: What language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) and areas (grammar, vocabulary and pronounciation) do student teachers think of improving with the help of Facebook in English classes?

Table 8. Gender-based language skill preference frequency and percentage

Gender	Language Skills						
	R	W	S	L	G	V	P
Male	15	15	9	13	3	7	1
Percent	19%	16.5%	20.5%	18.8%	15.8%	16.3%	20%
Female	64	76	35	56	16	36	4
Percent	81%	83.5%	79.5%	81.2%	84.2%	83.7%	80%
Total	79	91	44	69	19	43	5
Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

If examine the gender-based language skill preferences, we see that 76 females (83.5%) and 15 males (16.5%) mentioned writing skill. 64 females (81%) and 15 males (19%) mentioned reading skill. 56 females (81.2%) and 13 males (18.8%) mentioned listening skill. 35 females (79.5%) and 9 males (20.5%) mentioned speaking skill. 36 females (83.7%) and 7 males (16.3%) mentioned vocabulary. 16 females (84.2%) and 3 males (15.8%) mentioned grammar. 4 females (80%) and 1 male (20%) mentioned pronounciation.

The 5th interviewee reported opinion as follows:

> *Spelling, pronounciation, strong and weak forms of intonation and gisting. Through songs students could imitate sounds just like the singer and have a better idea about contractions. If we share cartoons and pictures we can teach new vocab. They want to learn its meaning and so look it up in the dictionary immediately.*

This quote illustrates that Facebook could be great help in enhancing segmentals and suprasegmentals in the target language. If they are involved in enjoyable activities like having songs or cartoons, they can appreciate Facebook use due to the rich aural and visual stimuli. Besides, they will want to understand what is going on, try to learn new words.

The 7th interviewee reported opinion as follows:

> *Writing and reading. Vocab. Prononunciation- we can use and share videos about a topic and have them watch and comment on it. Later I would ask questions about it. We can also share samples of texts- emails, formal and informal letters- as a source for their writing or assignment. Not spelling and punctuation because it is a free environment, like writing messages, just skipping or omitting some vowels or consonants.*

Learners can take the linguistic input on Facebook as their model. The teacher could get the opportunity to develop language skills integratedly and students will feel safe about making errors as they will act in a free environment.

The 11th interviewee reported opinion as follows:

Writing. I can send a paragraph and they will tell me the topic sentence. For listening we post a video and ask them to write what the boy or girl is saying between 10th -15th seconds. Reading- we can ask them to scan some texts and count the superlative words.

Facebook could be used to improve different language skills with various activities, from simple to more complex and long activities.

Research Question 1.2: What age group(s) can be taught English through Facebook according to student teachers?

Table 9. Age groups to be taught English via Facebook

Age Groups	Frequency	Percentage
Young Learners	18	8.3%
Adolescents	118	54.4%
Adults	81	37.3%
Total	217	100%

In Table 9, we see participants opinions on what age group(s) is/are suitable to be taught English via Facebook. The participants chose either one or more age group(s). The age groups were divided into three broad categories namely young learners, adolescents and adults. When we look at Table 17, we see that of the 227 points (100%) given in total, young learners item has 18 points (8.3%) while adolescents item has 118 points (54.4%) and finally adults item has 81 points (37.3%).

The 5th interviewee indicates opinion in the oral interview as follows:

Young learners aren't aware of what or how they are learning sth or not have an aim. On the other hand, adolescents and adults have awareness and they say I need to learn these things, such they think.

This participant stresses the possession of aim while learning a foreign language. In this regard, young learners are criticised for not having concrete or clear learning aims, which could damage their learning in an online environment.

The 16th interviewee indicates opinion in the oral interview as follows:

Young learners are open to any kind of thing. Facebook can be another world for them to try where they can find interactive videos and beneficial sites. In addition, it can be a way of collaborating with parents. Young people are good at using technology so why not to use Facebook. I think adolescents have adequate information on how to use Facebook. For adults, I think no way! It is easy for us to use new tech and it will be easier for our students to be accustomed to the new tech but some will disagree. We grew up with this technology but they didn't see such things. So it will be hard for them to accept it.

On the contrary, this participant is insisting on the involvement of young learners on Facebook for educational purposes since they are regarded digital natives but adolescents may need more guidance on how to act on Facebook while learning. Adults are thought to have difficulty in adapting to new technology due to their old habits.

Research Question 1.3: What language level(s) can be taught English through Facebook according to student teachers?

Table 10. Language levels to be taught English via Facebook

Language Levels	Frequency	Percentage
Beginner	30	12.6%
Intermediate	128	53.8%
Advanced	80	33.6%
Total	238	100%

Participants reflected their opinions on the use of Facebook in English classes by choosing the language level(s) that they thought to be suitable for teaching English via Facebook. They could choose one or more language level(s). The language levels were divided into three broad categories as beginners, intermediate and advanced levels.

When one examines Table 10 which shows the overall frequency and percentage of language levels to be taught English via Facebook, we see that there are 238 points in total. Out of 238 total points, 30 points belong to beginners, 128 points to intermediate level and finally 80 points to advanced level, which means beginner level has 12.6% of the total point while intermediate level has 53.8% of the total point and finally advanced level has 33.6% of the total points.

Participant 138 indicates opinion in the the oral interview as follows:

Intermediate students because in order to get the highest learning level, learners must have the suitable and general idea about English. But beginners don't have the necessary skills and need to be guided, which can be a burden for the teacher. As for advanced students, they already know about English and won't need to learn sth on Facebook. For intermediate students, we can get their attention and contribute totheir own learning. If it is difficult for students, we can give them a push, whether they want to learn sth or not. Facebook can make individual learning possible for fast or slow learners.

The 15th interviewee indicates opinion in the oral interview as follows:

Beginners need the background information so that they will be able to understand what is going on Facebook. Intermediate level students seem more suitable for using Facebook and as they know the basic and necessary grammatical rules and lexical knowledge they can work out and understand the language there. As advanced students already know a lot about the language they need more academic language knowledge, I mean sth more challenging. It can be time-consuming for the teacher and they think it might be useless.

In both comments, Intermediate level students are regarded to benefit from Facebook in learning foreign languages more than the two groups in that they have an idea about how Englsih works, know some rules and equipped with some strategies to overcome difficulties but beginners are criticised for not being empowered with linguistic tools to survive on Facebook. Advanced level students are thought not to need Facebook to learn something new due to their rich language background.

Research Question 1.4: How (with what types of use) do student teacher prefer to integrate Facebook into English language classes?

Table 11. Types of Facebook use for ELT in order of importance*

Types of Facebook Use	Points	Percentage
In-class	333	38%
Outside-the-class	291	33%
Self-study	258	29%
Total	882	100%

*The least point respresents the highest importance.

In the WIF, student teachers ordered the items in Table 11, namely types of Facebook use as *in-class*, *outside-the-class* and *self-study*. The participants gave 1, 2 or 3 points, 1 being the most important and 3 the least important. Therefore, items with lower scores are considered more important than the ones with higher scores. Although some of the participants (27.5%) did not favour the use of Facebook in English classes, they expressed their views on what skills to be taught, order of importance, what age group(s) and language level(s) to be taught English via Facebook. Naturally these views were not taken into consideration in the further analyses.

When one examines Table 11, it is seen that participants gave 882 points for the order of importance in total. Of the 882 points, 333 belong to the in-class item, 291 to the ouside class item and finally 258 to the self-study item. Table 8 above shows that 38% of the points belong to the in-class item while 33% of the points belong to the outside-the-class item and finally 29% of the points belong to the self-study item. The in-class type of use appears to be the least important type of use to be applied via Facebook. The outside-the-class technique is seen as a mildly important type of use and finally the self-study type of use seems to be the most important.

Examples of In-Class Use in the WIF

The numbers represent the WIF order of the participants.

119- Even following comic pictures in a specific page with our prospective teachers and then next day talking and discussing about them are useful.

133- Yes, we can use Facebook for teaching English. There are some accounts for teaching English, if we use them, we can learn some words and review them. We can read stories via Facebook.

158- I think listening can be taught. Some warming-up activities can be done or teacher can share a video about the topic that they will learn it the next day for warm-up section.

The three participants give examples about how to use Facebook in the classrooms during English courses. They also touch upon how to teach language skills integratedly. They offer following funny pictures and discussing them, useing accounts specifically designed for language learning and watching videos. When students become a member of a group, they can learn from other members' experiences and they can develop their skills thanks to the rich aural and visual input found in Facebook facilities.

Examples of Outside-the-Class Use in the WIF

The numbers represent the WIF order of the participants.

84- Writing can be primarily taught through Facebook. We carried out a project in which Facebook was used two years ago. It was useful because with our friends, we commented on videos, updated our status and also we had fun while learning.

100- Yes, we can use it.We can share our experiences. We can ask others about problems we encounter in English learning. We get more answers, maybe different answers which help us to grasp the meaning etc. We can have a page where we do activities.

175-Yes, it can be used actually. We used Facebook as an interactive tool in acquisiton class. By means of face, you can communicate easily with your students, announce new knowledge, give feedback efficiently.

The participants belive that learning can continue even out of the class and they offer learning acitivies like project work, forming pages for learning and making a closed group where only certain learners can keep in touch and catch up with learning content. In this way, learners can be both informed about their English classes and carry out educational activities without time and place limitations.

Examples of Self-Study Tasks in the WIF

194- Yes, somebody can see a word s/he hasn't heard or seen before on Facebook so it can be useful. Also, they can speak English with friends so they can improve their English.

116- Listening and speaking can be taught via cameras and some listening vidos, clips.
19- Self-study is the most important as they can reach any information on this system and since the materials are various they will appeal to different kinds of intelligences and get their attention.

18- Self-study is the most important since it allows repetition and revision of what they have learnt or couldn't understand clearly at school. An important opportunity for individual learning.

Self-study was the most preferred type of Facebook use among the participant student teachers. These participants stress the involvement of "self" in the learning process in that learning could be empowered when one is actively engaged in the learning activities. Especially interaction with friends or native speakers can greatly contribute to learner motivation. Learners can also get the chance to choose among a variety of materials which are appropriate to their age, level and interest. They can also revise their previous learning items and build bridges between the previous and new knowledge with the help of visuals and activities.

Research Question 2: Are there any differences between male and female student teachers in terms of their preference of Facebook as a foreign language learning tool?

Table 12. Gender- FAELT relationship

			FAELT			Total
			FAY	FAN	FAUN	
Gender	Male	Count	26	12	0	38
		% within Gender	68.4%	31.6%	.0%	100.0%

Female	Count	120	46	7	173
	% within Gender	69.4%	26.6%	4.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	146	58	7	211
	% within Gender	69.2%	27.5%	3.3%	100.0%

When one examines Table 12, we see the relationship between gender and student teachers' perceptions about Facebook integration into English classes. As is seen in Table 13, of the 211 respondents, 38 of them are male while 173 of them are female, which means the number of female participants is nearly four and a half times more than male participants.

When one examines Table 12 in terms of gender, it is seen that 26 males favoured Facebook integration into English classes while 12 of them were against the idea and there were no males who were undecided. As for females, 120 females favoured Facebook integration into English classes while 46 of them were against the idea and 7 of them were undecied. Total score consists of 146 positive responses, 58 negative responses and finally 7 responses with undecided remarks.

Table 13. Chi-Square tests of gender-FAELT

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.824[a]	2	.402
Likelihood Ratio	3.056	2	.217
Linear-by-Linear Association	.103	1	.749
N of Valid Cases	211		

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.26.

When one examines Table 13, it is seen that the number of male and female participants does not show equal distribution. The relationship between gender and participant perceptions about Facebook integration into English classes is found not to be significant as probability co-efficient is not less than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). The unequal distribution of gender among participants can be considered as the limitation of the study and further studies with equal gender distribution could give more detailed information on this aspect of the study.

However, this study offers concrete insights about the positive and negative outcomes together with detailed examples given on educatioal activities and suggested exercises to be employed on Facebook.

This study's data indicates that high majority of student teachers (N=146, 69.2%) support Facebook integration into English classes. There are participants with negative attitudes or are undecided but we can help the ones against the application (N=58, 27.5%) or undecided (N=7, 3.3%) to change their viewpoints. The frequency of indecision may seem small but the frequency of opposition should not be underestimated since it forms nearly the quarter of total frequency and in light with their responses they can be advised the ways of dealing with possible problems they might

encounter in application and be given the necessary professional skills and pedagogical knowledge in their education so that they will feel competent enough to put innovative tools into practice in their future classes and better serve student needs.

Pedagogical Implications and Suggestions

Teachers should pay attention to learners characteristics while integrating online learning environments into traditional classroom settings. They should should consider learners' age, language level and motivation level because students have different expectations, konwledge, background, interests, needs and motivation. Integration of Facebook into foreign language classes requires certain factors to be considered. These include outcomes of application, social support or pressure, internal/external advantages or disadvantages. This study found, drawing on student teachers' perspectives, that Facebook inclusion could potentially enhance language skills, motivate learners to particpate in educational activities, help students to gain self-study skills, access massive amount of authentic learning materials, recieve instant feedback, practice new points and revise previous knowledge. In addition, widespread use of online resources, the high popularity of Facebook and easy access to the Internet make Facebook applicatiosn easier now than ever to think about how this social netowkring environment can be used to support English laguage learning. However, there might be some hindering factors like social pressure, technical breakdowns, distractions, mismanaging time, misuse or overuse, digital gap, self-discipline problems, inaccess to computers or the Internet, time constraints, and mother tongue use.

Today Facebook or Twitter is currently being introduced into teacher education programs, but in coming years both will likely be replaced with other socila netowring platforms. Therefore, teacher education requires continuous change and modification in conjuction with teaching trends and up-to-date communication services. However, we should balance the traditional and innovative ways of teaching in order to prevent misuse. We should not overuse technology or underestimate traditional teaching methods.

In conclusion, student teachers should be exposed to new and popular communication and interaction means like social networking sites in their own education so that they can gain knowledge, skill and expertise on how to apply such tools in their future classes. If they have concrete learning experiences, they will have a chance to see what it is like to be on Facebook as a learner and how to respond to students and how to give feedback as a teacher. Moreover, they will contribute to their professionalism and keep informed about the latest news and trends of educational moves. Therefore, teacher education programs need to be updated to comply with demands of the current era and help student teachers to gain the needed *teachnology skills* to effectively integrate both latest technology and appropriate teaching styles into their future classes.

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